



Supreme Court & National Court

Practice Direction No 2 of 2020

COVID-19 Teleconference Sitings

This Practice Direction is issued after consultation with the Chief Justice

Pursuant to the PNG Judiciary COVID-19 Response Notice issued by the Chief Justice on Wednesday 18 March 2020, I now issue the following instructions on the use of teleconference sittings.

1. During the State of Emergency imposed by the Executive Government, the Judiciary will be conducting hearing for matters that are considered urgent or for specific purposes only as approved.
2. A list of judges as approved by the Chief Justice will preside over such matters in Courtrooms 8, 9 and 1 as approved.
3. Courtrooms 8 and 9 are now equipped with telephone conferencing equipment which will now be utilised for case hearing over the phone line.
4. Protocol for access to listing of a matter;
 - a. A new matter or existing matter is brought to the attention of the Registrar or a Deputy Registrar as being urgent.
 - i. This will be done by way of e-filing or filing through email
 - ii. An appropriate letter expression urgency must also be sent to the Registrar.
 - b. The request is brought to the attention of the Deputy Chief Justice.
 - c. Once approved the matter is placed on a list of matters to be heard on a given day.
 - d. Matters are listed 20 minutes apart by the Registry commencing at 9:30 am or 1:30 pm or as directed by a Judge.
 - e. Lawyers or litigants are advised by the Registry of the date and time of hearing.
 - f. Lawyers or Litigants are required to provide a phone number of a landline to which the court will call. Where landline is not available the lawyer or litigant can provide a number for a mobile phone provided;
 1. The mobile phone is one where it is capable of having sufficient frequency

2. The mobile phone is fully charged
 3. The mobile phone is located at a place where the mobile reception is very clear, and the frequency does not fluctuate.
 - g. Ten minutes prior to a hearing the lawyer and or the litigant must be ready to receive a call from the Court.
 - h. The associate to the presiding judge will call the lawyer or litigant whose case appears first on the list at or around 9:20 am
 - i. The case will proceed thereafter;
 - ii. Lawyers and litigants second on the list of cases and others thereafter listed must be ready to receive a call from the Court twenty minutes or so thereafter.
 - iii. The practice is the same at 1:20 pm.
 - i. Where a matter is adjourned to a later date during the SOE, appropriate directions will be issued by the Court.
5. Protocol for the conduct of the hearing;
 - a. A lawyer or litigant who is called upon to use the teleconference facilities must;
 - i. On answering the call state, his or her name and her role in the case.
 - ii. Must wait for the other party to respond in the same manner if also called upon by the Court.
 - iii. Both lawyers and litigants after being introduced must wait to be called upon by the presiding judge to address the Court.
 - iv. When speaking the lawyer or litigant must again identify himself or herself before addressing the Court to assist with correct identification of the speaker for transcription purposes.
 - v. This protocol should be followed until the hearing is concluded.
6. Orders- decisions
 - a. At the end of the proceedings, the Lawyer/ Litigant granted any order or decision must send a draft to the associate for endorsement unless the Court is able to release a signed version of the order before the day's end.
 - b. After endorsement by the associate, the Registrar will sign and issue a sealed copy of the order- decision to all concerned.

Dated the 9th April 2020



Ian V Augerea
Registrar